What is claimed is:
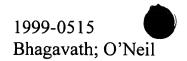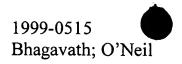
1. A method of providing summary information about recipients of multicast sessions, comprising the steps of:

enhancing the operation of an edge device to count the number of recipient hosts of an IP multicast session;

storing the count in a measurement device and supplementing the count with information supplied from a directory source;

generating aggregate information about audience levels and demographics of recipient hosts of the multicast session; and

supplying the information to a supplier of the multicast session permitting an immediate evaluation and response.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein:

the step of enhancing the operation of an edge device includes a step of counting streams traversing a MUG type edge device using an unicast link between the edge device and the recipient hosts.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein:

the step of enhancing the operation of an edge device includes a step of enhancing a protocol message to provide IP addresses of recipient hosts of the multicast session connected to the edge device.

4. The method of claim 1, further including:

a step of reporting IGMP membership and leave group reports from a host recipient to an edge device.

5. The method of claim 1, further including:

a step of aggregating information collected to insure privacy of individual host recipients.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein:

2   the step of supplying information includes a step of billing the

3   supplier for the information provided.

1   7. The method of claim 1, wherein:

2   the step of supplementing the count includes a step of creating a

3   directory-listing members of groups of multicast host recipients.

1   8. The method of claim 1, further including a step of:

2   enhancing IGMP messages to include IP addresses of hosts that join

3   and leave multicast sessions.

1   9. The method of claim 1, further including a step of:

2   including IGMP software in an edge router and in a host PC to report

3   IP addresses of host recipients as they join and leave multicast sessions.

1   10. The method of claim 1, further including a step of:

2   including with an edge router an enhancement to provide IP addresses

3   of host computers that join and leave multicast sessions.